

Wayne Allard

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SENATOR ALLARD CALLS ON FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, APHIS TO MOVE FORWARD ON TAMARISK BIOCONTROL PROJECTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - In a letter sent last week, U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) called on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to end delays on tamarisk biocontrol projects in Colorado.

“Due to an apparent miscommunication between the Fish and Wildlife Service and APHIS, the State of Colorado has been thwarted in its efforts to introduce a natural tamarisk predator,” Senator Allard said. “Further delay will mean another lost year when progress could have been made against the tamarisk infestation.”

The Colorado Department of Agriculture is prepared to release the tamarisk leaf feeding beetle in four locations in Colorado: Dinosaur National Monument, Horse Thief Canyon near Mack, Bonny Reservoir in Yuma, and the South Platte River in Adams County. However, they have been unable to proceed due to a lack of coordination at the federal level.

The tamarisk, or salt cedar, is a non-native, invasive plant species that has spread throughout riparian habitats in Colorado. In addition to disrupting native ecosystems, an individual plant can consume up to 200 gallons of water per day, further exacerbating drought conditions in the West.

“While much of Colorado is still experiencing a multi-year drought, it’s unfortunate that projects seeking to address the tamarisk problem are caught in bureaucratic red tape,” Senator Allard said. “Both APHIS and the Fish and Wildlife Service have spent millions to eradicate the tamarisk, yet have failed to act on these projects.”

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